241 To clear land for a garden the Caribs have work parties. They cut off branches, pile up wood and leaves, and burn off the land in order to prepare it for planting. These work parties are organized in the following way. They have a drinking party in which all the strong men are requested to join in the work. Later that morning they fell a square patch of wood 100 to 200 feet on a side. The wood is knocked on the ground in disorder. They drink the rest of the day and the following night as payment. Six weeks later they set fire to the field at noon when the breeze blows. They set the fire on the side of the field to the wind, and the greater part of the refuse is burned. Then they hold another drinking party in order to pick up and complete what is left to be done. They hold work parties also in other situations and replace by this means the absence of servants and laborers which are unknown among them. [86]
At their feasts they eat as little as they drink much. [71]

584 When the Caribs have completed their tasks on a work party they have a drinking party where drink is served by the man who has sent for them. When they have drunk everything they go to their host and say "My friend, I leave. I have drunk all the drink which you have prepared in return for my labor. Good-by." [362]

283 The Caribs do not prevent either men or women from becoming drunk. But they do not allow men to seduce other men's wives, while these women are drunk. [319]

The Caribs are so vile in their drunkenness that when they feel themselves to be too full they turn their head aside and often even without leaving their place in the company, they put their fingers into their mouths to bring up everything they had swallowed. [223]

627 Vengeance rules among the Caribs, but it is only carried out at their drinking parties. The offended person is careful to remain sober in order to better the success of his plan. He is not punished for his deed if he has done it to avenge the death of one of his relatives. But if he has unjustly killed a man, it will not fail to pass that sooner or later the relatives of the dead man will put him to death, unless the murderer quickly flees to another island. [370]

night. If they build a pirogue or a house it takes them an entire year to do the work. When they stay in their houses, some make baskets and others make oars which they smooth with glass or with pumice stone; and others rock themselves in their hammocks, talk, or play the flute. These occupations do not break their arms. They all are of good size, muscular, thick-set and well-proportioned, although their food is poor and meager. As a consequence they are not energetic. The women are scarcely more diligent for they need six months or even years to make one cotton hammock. They work in the morning making cassava, cooking, and watching their children. After eating they go to their garden, harvest manioc, clear the spot, dig the ditches, and replant it. Then they come back with their burdens and give their husbands dinner and then they themselves eat. They peel and grate the manioc and squeeze it. These are the ordinary occupations of the women and of the wives of captains as well. [200]

The Carib women go to their gardens every day to dig sweet potatoes or manioc, and the wives of the captains go just as the others do. After they have uprooted the crop they clean the soil and replant the manioc or potatoes. They do not use spades, nor hoes, because they are not accustomed to them, but use a sharp stick. They dig the soil with it and make a ditch for manioc, then go back loaded with their full carrying basket. [149]

The Caribs don't use our vegetables. They have gardens instead of fields and vineyards. They obtain from them bread and ofticou, that is to say they grow manioc and sweet potatoes. This is what we call our plantations. This is different from the Caribs for whom houses and carbet are separated from gardens. They dig one hole here and there, different from the French whose gardens and houses are not scattered. [231]

"I have planted manioc wood" is the expression for saying "I sowed or planted." The main cultivation of the country are roots produced by a small tree. When it is uprooted and the root is taken, one cuts the wood into pieces as long as fingers which are placed into the cultivated ground with a digging stick. These produce other small manioc trees with roots. [96]

Every evening groups of women go to the woods carrying axes to split sandlewood which they cut into little splinters. They put

[i.e., the Carib.—Anslyn]

8. Food and Its Preparation

262 The Caribs cannot be starved out because their houses are not closed, and as soon as they see danger, or suspect it, they go into the mountains where they have gardens for this contingency. Besides, if they are on the seashore they find different kinds of shellfish on or under the rocks. They fish in the rivers for tadpoles, crayfish, and small snails upon which they can subsist. They know the fruit-bearing trees in the woods, as well as roots as big as the thigh, which are the yams, and these are also eaten in their houses. The Frenchmen are not so clever when they first arrive in the islands. At the beginning of the colonization of Guadeloupe, we had trouble with the natives. They besieged us for a few hours, and although they withdrew, they continued to wander in the woods and also along the coasts in their canoes, and they killed anyone they met. The dearth of bread and water compelled the other French to starve in their houses. [226]

241 Manioc is of great advantage to the poorer inhabitants of the islands, as well as to the Caribs. The latter have no need for horses, plows, granaries, threshers, nor do they require cellars for casks or vintagers to cultivate and gather their grapes. This is true because they sustain themselves on roots. A single man who worked only at this task would be able to feed fifty people at least. The Caribs use most of their manioc to brew beer. Manioc is a shrub which bears grain but they do not eat this nor do they sow it. They only cut off some of the shoots which they uproot. The Caribs replant it in the following way. Instead of a hoe they use a great stick, pointed at the end, which they hold in their hands and break the soil with repeated blows. They dig out a hole the size of a bushel in which they plant some shoots of manioc of about an arm's length or longer. These shoots are sometimes planted flat and sometimes placed upright. The French make a hole three feet long and two feet wide which they call a manioc trench. Along the middle of the trench they plant four manioc shoots, each being four fingers thick. The large end is always in the air because it does not grow well in the soil. They weed until the manioc covers the land. White manioc is edible after eight months, red manioc after one year, purple manioc may be kept longer in the soil, and the black variety can remain in the soil two or three years. At the beginning the stem grows upright until worms attack the top. When leaves drop off joints appear and are ready to be sprouts for planting. The unprepared

241 root is pure poison which might kill someone. Even cassava may have the same effect when it is not sufficiently cooked. If manioc water could kill when drunk abundantly, all the Caribs would now be dead, for they eat no fish, meat, or tomali which is not cooked in manioc water. Cassava by itself is so little nourishing that at the beginning when I was among the Caribs, one could not hear me speak two feet away because I was so weak. It is true that I did not eat enough of it. Eaten with sweet potatoes or something else, cassava is sufficient even at sea, provided that the taste of tobacco has not spoiled it. I think it is fortunate that cassava is light on the stomach. [328]

Kiére is the name for manioc [328] Purple manioc is called itachaheu, red manioc is miriti, and black manioc is belêhuera. [330]

412 The grating device of the Caribs is a small plank covered with 252 sharp little inlaid stones. After supper all the women grate only the manioc roots which will be used the following day, because ordinarily they eat only fresh bread. The women wash and then grate the manioc and reduce it to a flour. The Carib women grate each day in order to have stale manioc water which they use the next morning to boil their fish. They also do it so that the water will drain out and the flour will become slightly sour. This sourness takes the place of yeast, and without it cassava would be too sweet, tasteless, and not appetizing. [139]

262 The fine flour of manioc is mouchache. The Carib women grate the manioc in the evening, and the one who has finished first puts her head outside and shouts to the others, "Come to press the flour." They all come with their calabashes and gather around the flour and take some in their hands, press it into their calabashes, and then put it back. They go then to another house and so forth, until they have enough of what they need. Back home they put their calabash in some spot in the house and let the manioc water settle for use the next day in cooking. The fine flour settles to the bottom and is hard like wax. They ordinarily crush this into a powder to mix it with other flour in order to improve the cassava. The girls make cassava consisting only of this flour, the bread being no thicker than a cat's tongue. When this is well baked it crunches when eaten and is very appetizing. [224]

Cassava, called márou, is made from pressed manioc flour which is spread out on a warm plate and is as thick as a finger or a thumb.

512 Other men go to their houses in order to chop wood, or spend their
462 time at some small task which they consider necessary. Some em-
[415] ploy themselves by making ibichets. These are little sifters, round or square, with such small holes that they use them to sift their flour and oticou. They make them from the first barbs of a plant which the Caribs of Dominica call odalloman and which I have described under the name of solaman because I have heard it named by others in this way.

Still other men are seen making lines to fish in the open sea, others make cotton belts, while the laziest men of all cut off their beard with a knife or pluck it out, hair by hair. Some make boutou clubs, bows, arrows, or catolis which are a kind of carrying basket used by the women. The more industrious work on canoes and pirogues and often spend several full years making one.

241 When they go to clear the forest for the habitation of a neighbor,
462 it takes about two or three hours to do, if they feel like working. They knock down the trees in a hundred foot square, the wood lying
[461] in confusion on the ground. They then go drinking, and get drunk for the rest of the day and sometimes the whole night. Concerning all of these tasks, they work an hour a day, and even then so slackly that they seem to be mocking their job.

They consume the rest of the time being painted and combed by their wives, playing the flute, and having daydreams.

883 All this which has just been described is the work of men. How-
ever, all the youths continually practice drawing the bow and become so expert that they can shoot flying birds. They sometimes wrestle,
[527] but in a very different way from the French, for they grab each other by the forearm and give each other such shakes that Father Raymond [Breton] states he saw a man who, having been thrown on the ground, remained there more than a quarter of an hour before he became fully conscious.

562 Whatever may be said about the Indies being the paradise for
512 women, this is true only for our French women, as we shall describe in its place. Concerning the Carib wives, they are more exactly
[461] slaves of their husbands, rather than companions, for they are never
462 idle. As soon as they get up they go to bathe, and then prepare their
512 husbands' soup which is made with some boiled bananas. After the husband has been served a full plate, and he is through with it, they

301 two plates. These leggings are very much prized by the girls and
[354] women because they are an infallible mark of their freedom; the slave women never wear them. Nevertheless, they are inconvenient and painful; when water gets these leggings they tighten so much that the women sometimes weep because of the pain it causes them.

9. Carbets, Houses, Beds, Pirogues, and Canoes

342 Concerning the dwellings, the houses or habitations of the Caribs, each family forms a settlement. The father of the family has his house, where he lives with his unmarried children [the young unmarried men]. The wives and all their unmarried children [boys and young unmarried women] live in their own houses around that of the father. These houses have no ceiling under the roof and are separated into two or three rooms. One is used for eating, another for sleeping and to receive guests who wish to visit them. Some have a special room where they put all the caconnes, that is to say, precious things like bows, arrows, clubs, axes, billhooks, and knives.
415 They also add their hammocks and their small baskets, where they keep their mirrors, scissors, necklaces, and chains of glass beads—in a word all their ornaments.

The other utensils used for eating and drinking are kept in the kitchens. These consist of small earthenware jars; canaris, which are large jars used in making ouicou; and some other small vessels which they call coui. The coui are made of calabashes.

352 The rest of their furniture consists of small three-legged stools, carved from a single block of wood. They also use small tables with four wooden legs called matoutou, woven from latan [palm] leaves and reeds.

[341] Their gardens, where they plant provisions, are in the woods
314 separated from the place where they ordinarily live. In the midst of the houses there is a large common house [men's house] which they call a carbet. The carbet is always sixty to eighty feet long. They are made by putting large posts eighteen to twenty feet high into the ground. The upper ends of these posts are forked, and they lay a latan [palm] or some other very straight tree on these forks. Upon

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

226 [252] **Fishing.**—The staple food of the *Carib* was the crab, which they hunted at night by torchlight. They roasted the meat, seasoning it with a sauce called taumalin,[5] a mixture of lime juice and pounded peppers with the greenish meat next to the shell of the male crab.

Sea food was an important part of the diet. The *Carib* picked up shellfish along the shore. They caught fish with small nets (at night or when the water was calm); with hook and line (the hooks being of tortoise shell); by scattering a certain kind of poisonous wood on the water; or by use of the bow and arrow. The arrows were long and three-pronged; each was attached by a string to a wooden float so that it could easily be retrieved. Harpoons (with separate points) were employed to catch the manatee and sea turtle; the land turtle was stalked. Corrals are mentioned; they may have been fish wiers.

224 **Hunting.**—On land the *Carib* hunted the agouti and the lizard with dogs, smoking the lizards out of the holes into which the dogs drove them. They also caught birds, using the bow and arrows tipped with cotton or else stupefying the birds with smoke from a poisonous wood.

231 **Domesticated animals.**—Parrots and dogs were the only domesticated animals except when, in historic times, the people kept poultry and swine, largely for trade with the Europeans.

252 **Preparation of fish and meat.**—The *Carib* took special pains in the preparation of fish and meat, broiling them sometimes for a whole day over a slow fire on a wooden grid 2 feet (0.6 m.) high. They also roasted fish and agouti meat in the ash and smoked the latter for purposes of storage, cooking the smoked meat in cassava juice when they wished to eat it. For the seasoning of fish and meat they used a sauce called coüi, which was made by boiling the juice of the manioc with crushed peppers, lime juice, and manioc flour. They made a soup from left-over scraps of fish and meat, as well as from agouti bones. These were boiled in manioc juice with peppers, manioc flour, and oysters to form a strong mixture in which the Indians dipped cassava bread. Apparently this was as close as the *Carib* came to the typical *Arawak* pepper pot.

262 The same sources that describe the foregoing methods of hunting, fishing, and preparing meat also mention a taboo on the manatee, the turtle, and all land animals. The sources imply that this taboo was general, a fact difficult to reconcile with the above statements.[6] It is certain, however, that the *Carib* never took salt or ate the flesh of the eel and that they avoided fat.

241 **Farming and preparation of agricultural foods.**—The Indians cultivated both the bitter and the sweet varieties of manioc, using the same

[5] All *Carib* terms cited here are from the men's language.

[6] This discrepancy may represent a difference between ideal and practice or it may reflect a breaking down of the system of taboos. There is some indication that the taboos were followed only during a limited period, as other feasts. (See p. 557.)

5: Rouse E-4 (no date) 1948 ST13 Callinago ST13 (1650-1700)

methods of planting and of preparation as the *Arawak*. The kitchen utensils, however, were more varied. The *Carib* made their graters from coral, from thorny branches, or by inserting wood or stone splinters in a plank. They removed the juice in a cylindrical basketry strainer (pl. 94), hung with a weight from a tree; sifted the flour in a basketry sieve; and baked the cake on either a stone or a clay griddle with the aid of a wooden spatula.

Corn, sweetpotatoes, yams, beans, and peppers also were cultivated, the corn being made into bread as among the *Arawak*. The sweetpotato and the yam were particularly important; they were planted as cuttings after a rain. When full grown the tubers were roasted or boiled and eaten with a sauce like that made for meat. The roots and leaves were used as a seasoning.

The *Carib* ate fruits of various kinds, including the banana (post-Conquest), the plantain, the guayba, the papaya, and the pineapple. Bananas were cooked in sugared water; both they and the other fruits were also pounded in a mortar to make a thick paste. Sugarcane, acquired from the Spaniards, was boiled in water or was chewed fresh, and honey was mixed with water to make a drink.

Eating.—Except for the morning meal taken soon after fixing their hair and bodies, the *Carib* ate irregularly. Men sat on low stools in the carbet (men's house) and were served by women on little tables (matoutou), covered with leaves. Later the women ate by themselves in the kitchen.

VILLAGES AND HOUSES

Settlements.—*Carib* villages were located in the areas least favorable for surprise attacks by the enemy, being usually on the windward side of the island and in an open space upon a rise in the land. Each village was near a stream, which provided drinking water and was used daily for bathing. The villages were moved frequently, after a death, sickness, or some other disagreeable incident. Each was small; it consisted of a carbet (men's house), various smaller houses for the women, and several storage platforms. These structures were arranged irregularly around a small plaza where the people were accustomed to sit by the light of a fire at night.

Houses.—The carbet (taboüi) was an oval building, which later became rectangular, about 60 feet (18 m.) long and 20 feet (6 m.) wide. To construct it the *Carib* set into the ground forked posts 10 feet (3 m.) high and lashed across beams to the tops of these posts. They laid on poles, extending from the ground at one end to the peak of the house at the other; bound other poles horizontally over the first set; and thatched the whole down to the ground with palm leaves. The floor was of dirt and had a hearth in the center. There were no partitions; the only openings were a door no more than 4 feet (1.2 m.) high in the middle of each side and end.

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

On the other hand, Caribs consider the white man's custom of manuring land as disgusting, and would never knowingly eat food so grown. The finding of dung in a provision ground is sufficient reason for abandoning a part or the whole of the cultivation. A serious dispute arose, while I was in the Reserve, because one family accused members of another family of leaving excrement on their land. Perhaps this is one more reason why the Caribs' gardens are so far from their dwellings.

There does not seem to be any hard and fast rule with regard to the division of labor between the sexes, except such as physical fitness dictates. Hunting, fishing, sawing, land clearing, canoe and house building are obviously men's occupations, here as elsewhere. Work on the provision ground is fairly evenly shared. Twine and cords, torches, shark oil, Carib panniers, manioc sifters, and "couleuvres" are made by men usually, though not exclusively. Vegetable oil (palma Christi, known here as "carapat"), open, radial kitchen and garden baskets (corbeilles), the cleaning and (until recently) spinning of cotton, the preparation of farine and cassava bread—except for the grating of the manioc, at which the men often help—and all other household duties are women's work. Although a Carib be returning straight to his house after a fishing expedition, he expects his women folk to meet him on the shore and to carry the fish home. When compelled to carry a load himself, the Carib man always puts it on his shoulder or back, whereas the women have adopted the Creole negro custom of bearing burdens on the head.

River bathing is a daily habit with all Caribs, but once a month the Carib man takes a special kind of bath in the privacy of his own home with water in which certain herbs have soaked. The names of three so used are: the sensitive plant (*Mimosa pudica*), sou marqué (*Cassia bicapsularis*), and kudjuruk (or kugururk—unidentified). The bath must be taken on the night when the moon is new or "good" (that is, for planting), and its object is that of a spiritual antiseptic, said to counteract and defeat the evil effects of possible sorcery or piai directed against the bather during the preceding moon.

A few simple remedies used by the Caribs of Dominica today are, in the case of—

Local inflammation: Half of an ember-baked green papaya applied hot as a poultice.

Internal contusion: The gum of the lowland red gommier (*Bursera gummifera*) as a plaster.

Wounds and cuts: The pounded heart of the kanu tree(?), together with salt. Shark oil and pimento leaves are also used, as is the fat of the Tête-Chien boa.

Flux, or intestinal chill: An infusion of the bark or roots of the wild white guava.

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

The most common river fish are popularly known as mullet, pike, 226
"flathead" (têtard, Carib: makúba), "cocos," "loches." To these must be added two varieties of fresh-water crayfish (Carib: wàgu, and smaller, içulu), prawns ("bouques"), and shrimps (chevrettes). A kind of river periwinkle, called vignot, is also eaten. Methods of capture vary a good deal: flatheads, prawns, shrimps, and sometimes small crayfish are "felt for" under rocks and banks; cocos are caught with hook and prawn for bait, or with the épervier at the river mouth. A special and rather curious method of catching crayfish is sometimes practiced: a length of caapi (species of ivy) is passed through a bit of raw manioc which is then hung in the water, the other end of the caapi being attached to a rock or stone on the bank. Returning some hours later, usually after dark, the fisherman finds a quantity of stupefied crayfish collected around the manioc, whose poisonous juice has rendered them incapable of flight. Loche, pike, and mullet may be caught with hook and worm, or in a special trap known as bachoua, now becoming extremely rare. A more usual method, however, is by poisoning the river.

Two fish poisons are known and used commonly by the Caribs of 226
Dominica today: the leaves of the shrub *Phyllanthus conami* (usually 278
called "énivrage") and the applelike fruit of a small to medium sized tree called bàbarra or bambarra (*Diospyros* sp., *Piscidia erythrina* L.). The latter is more powerful, but may be used only in fresh water, whereas the leaves of the conami are sometimes employed to poison small creeks and pools along the seashore. Each member of the party (women for the most part) arrives at the river with a load of conami leaves. These are then pounded and thrown in the river. As soon as the fish begin to jump out of the water to escape the effects of the poison the Caribs dive in and seize them. The bàbarra apples are also crushed, but are enclosed in a basket which is immersed only for the time being, as it would poison the water for almost a week were it left there.

A third variety of fish poison, used by some, is the bark of the tree known in Dominica as bois savonette (soap tree), bois cicérou, or bois pipiri. It is a large tree with small, diamond-shaped leaves which froth when rubbed in water, and bears a pod about 6 inches long containing three smooth red seeds the size of a pea. Possibly a species of *Lonchocarpus*. Not to be confused with the soap bush called Malvinia or Sang Dragon. All catalogs of West Indian flora are very confused and contradictory.

Cultivation

The Caribs' main food supply comes from individual family gardens 241
or provision grounds, made by burning the forest (usually secondary growth) and sowing or planting in the ashes between the burned tree

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

stumps. Partly as a protection against the depredations of domestic animals (hens, pigs, goats, cows) and partly because, under primitive methods of culture, the ground becomes exhausted and a new garden must be made every 2 or 3 years, the provision grounds are for the most part situated beyond the coastal hill crest on the slopes of the Pegoua Valley, some miles distant from the homes of their owners. Practically the only implements of culture used today are the cutlass (machete) and the digging stick—a strong, sharp-pointed stick popularly known as "lochette" (Carib: koyéré).

Manioc (*Manihot utilissima*) still forms the principal crop, although its importance as a staple diet has diminished in the last half century. Several varieties are known and distinguished by the following local appellations: manioc noir (the commonest), m. blanc, m. violet, m. bleu, m. beurre, m. 100 livres, m. doux, camanioc. The last two are nonpoisonous and may be eaten as vegetables. Manioc is planted by cuttings—usually by groups of three to one pit—and takes from 1 year to 18 months to reach maturity. The process of farine and cassava making is described elsewhere.

Next to manioc, the most important tubers cultivated are: chou (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium* Sch., malanga, tannia, taya) of various species, varieties of yam (*Dioscorea alata, piloisiuscula, multiflora, Cayennensis, trifida, tuberosa*—blanc and de l'eau, bâtard, marron, à piquants noirs, couch-couche, yam bonda, etc.), of sweet potato (red, yellow, white), of *Maranta* (red, white), *Solanum*, and *Cipura*. Squash and Indian corn are also grown, but do not form a staple food, as with the Indians of central and southern North America. The latter is never ground into flour, but is roasted and eaten whole, rather after the manner of a delicacy or sweetmeat. Bananas, plantains, and breadfruit (*Artocarpus*) of the ordinary and of the "chestnut" (*semisifera*) varieties are grown and eaten extensively. Various fruit trees and other utilitarian trees and bushes are cultivated around and near the houses. Such are: cotton,[1] coffee, cocoa, palma Christi or castor-oil plant, roucou (*Bixa orellana*), calabash (*Crescentia cujete*), guava, mango, sugarcane, papaya, various species of anona (*muricata, reticulata, squamosa*—corossol, cachiman, pomme canelle, etc.), and la pitte or silk grass (*Bromelia* sp.) for the making of twine and fishing lines, *Phyllanthus conami* or "zivrage" for fish poisoning, Malvinia or "soap bush," sapodilla, and pineapples (of which several small species grow wild in the woods).

The clearing of the land is done by the men, the rest of the work (planting, weeding, digging, and gathering) being divided among both sexes largely according to individual taste or family arrangement.

[1] Two varieties—so-called black and white, according to lint-cotton color. The former is somewhat better.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
ST13 Callinago ST13

in shape they are robust, well-formed, with
142 small hands and feet, in color decidedly light, and some even fair, their complexion being of a yellowish cast. They make canoes and woven baskets, after the manner of the aborigines, are skilled fishers and sometimes hunters, and are altogether trusty and superior in many respects to the blacks.

291 Several writers have described the Caribs during various periods in their history since coming into notice, but I will select from them one who wrote about two hundred years ago, whose pages bear every evidence of honesty and authenticity. At that time the English were mainly in possession of the islands. He says: "They go stark naked, both men and women; though the Christians have conversed very much amongst them, yet have all their persuasions to induce them to cover themselves been to no purpose. . . .
302 They change their natural color by dyeing their bodies with *roucou*, which makes them red all over. . . . They also
301 adorn the crown of the head with a little hat made of bird's feathers of different colors. . . . They bore their ears,
304 nose, lips, for the insertion of ornaments. . . . About
291 their necks they wear necklaces made of the bones of their enemies, teeth of agoutis, etc. . . . On great occasions, they wear scarfs and girdles of feathers. . . . Their most valued ornaments were gorgets of copper, obtained from the Arrowaks by plunder, crescent-shaped and shining, and
[425] these are, most frequently, the only possessions they leave their children at death. . . . They wear cotton cloth and
291 can dye it in various colors, chiefly red; they had hammocks when found by Columbus. . . . They made fine
323 pottery, which they baked in kilns, and also wove fine
[241] baskets. . . . They cultivated their land in common. . . .
766 They buried the corpse of a chief, or head of a family, in
775 the centre of his own dwelling. . . . Their heaven seems to have been a sort of Mohammedan paradise of houris and
600 harems for the brave. . . . They raised rustic altars, placing upon them fruits and flowers. . . . The Caribs have

12: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1949
ST13 Callinago ST13
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tells us moreover, since long before his time; and their enmity toward the English, aroused by the latter's insatiable land-greed and temporarily dispelled by the treaty of 1773 (which assigned them the northern and more mountainous quarter of the island), had been subsequently re-awakened by the openly expressed intentions of many English colonists to dispossess them still further. Instigated and supported by the French revolutionary leader, Victor Hugues, war between the St Vincent Carib ("Black" and "Yellow") together with the "democratical whites" on the one hand, and the English together with their slaves on the other, broke out on March 10, 1795, and continued until, "before the close of November 1796, the Charaibes and their allies had all submitted, on the terms offered to them by the British commander."[15] The narrative continues:

> The Charaibes, including women and children, were in number nearly 5000; and the whites and people of colour amounted to scarcely less than 1000. As, after what had passed, it was much to be feared that the colonists could never again rely upon the fidelity of their uncivilized neighbours, it was finally resolved to remove the Charaibes from the colony, and they were in consequence conveyed with their families to the Island of Ratan [*sic!*], in the Bay of Honduras.[16]

Rouse continues: "The *Carib* who remained in the West Indies also intermarried somewhat with the Negroes. They continued to reside in Dominica and St. Vincent until the end of the 19th century, when they were moved to a reservation in Dominica."[18] The present *Carib Reserve* in Dominica was created in June 1903 by enlarging the boundaries of what for long had been the largest remaining Carib settlement in the island. As far as I know, no enforced removal of Caribs took place; and there are still several patches of "Carib lands" outside the *Reserve*, on which Carib families or descendants of Caribs are living today. Certainly, neither then nor at any other time were Caribs moved from St Vincent to Dominica.

"The period covered is that from 1650 to 1700. . . ."[17] Rouse nevertheless speaks of coconuts and limes, tortoise-shell fish-hooks and clay griddles, as if these things were contemporaneous, which is unlikely. Breton saw only two coconut trees (which the Caribs called palma, from the Spanish word for palm) in the whole of Dominica; and considered them rare enough to take and plant a nut at Basse Terre, Guadeloupe. As for limes, he says expressly: "they [the Caribs] hardly use them." Of turtle-shell fish-hooks, the 1647 *Relation* says: "On en voit encore chez eux, quoi qu'ils ne s'en servent plus."[18] On the other hand, as

15 Edwards, *History*, vol. 4, pp. 73-74.
16 *Handbook*, p. 548.
17 *Handbook*, pp. 549-550.
18 Breton, *Dictionaire Caribe-Français*, p. 297; Armand de la Paix, p. 68.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Because it was the most hostile and mountainous of all the Lesser Antillean islands, without flat lands for cultivation or a safe harbor for shipping, Dominica was long considered unworthy of capture (3) (66). As late as 1748 the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle assigned it « to the undisputed possession of the native Indians ». Even after the British occupation in 1760 the Caribs continued for many years to be an important independent group which inhabited the windward coast and the high wooded interior of the island. Today the few remaining families of Caribs on Dominica's rugged eastern coast are all that remain of the once powerful island tribes.

The same rugged physiography, which delayed and hindered the expansion of the white man and of the imported negro in Dominica has not only permitted the Carib to linger on but has also safeguarded various species of the biota, including those of native origin as well as those brought to the Antilles by the Indians. Oster (39), for example, has shown that half a dozen species of birds are peculiar to Dominica. In the reptilian and mammalian groups there are also endemic representatives. Fortunately the immigrant mongoose which has caused such havoc to the native fauna in certain of the neighboring isles has not yet migrated to Dominica.

Of her vegetation and flora Dominica can truly boast, for of all the Caribbees here is one of the richest, the least despoiled, and perhaps the closest to its original natural state. This tiny island of but 300 square miles has more forested land than any other island in the Lesser Antilles, Trinidad excepted. But already the destruction of the forests has begun, initiated by the widespread tropical habit of continually shifting the cultivated plot. Forest land is cleared and planted to native subsistence crops only to be abandoned after several years use when the fertility of the soil has been exhausted. Worthless and weedy trees, exemplified by certain species of the genus *Miconia* (locally known as bois krikré), are favored by the progressive clearing of the forest. Until recently the lack of proper forestry regulations helped to darken the picture, and valuable trees such as laurier de roze (*Ocotea* sp.[1]) and Spanish Cedar (*Cedrela odorata* L.) have rapidly

[1] No men of the authorities are omitted in the text if the species is treated in the systematic enumeration that follows.

[text continues on p. 516.—Ed.]

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

137 declined in numbers. Many of the more desirable species are *arbres de chasse*, the distribution of their fruits aided by native doves and forest pigeons. The extinction of such « hunter's trees » tends to reduce the avian population. The inevitable result is a depletion of both fauna and flora.

177 All these are signs that Dominica may no longer continue to be a natural West Indian reservoir of wild life. The Caribs are also in danger. Negro infiltration and the coming to the Indian Reserve of a church, of a school, and of a police station have led not only to the abandonment of the Carib language but also to the loss of much of the tribe's stock of nature-lore.

The opening up of new land has pushed the forest much farther from the Caribs' homes than it was even thirty years ago. Difficulty in obtaining from the forest those raw materials needed in basketry and in dugout canoe building has brought about a gradual decline of these and allied crafts. One result is that the [241] Caribs now have more time to spend tending imported crops planted in their provision grounds. These gardens, like all others in Dominica, are cultivated without deep digging or manuring on the primitive system of clearing and burning the forest, gathering one or two crops, and moving farther afield. Another result [224] of the retreat of the forest is a decrease in the number of hunters. These men were naturally the best acquainted with those wild plants which could be of use while in the woods. Moreover many « medicines » and vegetable « charms » were operative for success in the chase; and the knowledge of the virtues of such plants [829] remained the property of individual hunters or of their families. The loss of the hunter class has thus meant the loss of much plant-lore.

177 The addition of an extension to the Imperial Road (the principal 49 high road of Dominica), which now practically cuts the island in two, will probably complete the process of culture disintegration and of forest disintegration. With these will go still more of the plant-lore and, as elsewhere in the West Indies, the road system may even lead to the extinction of many interesting species.

121 From the above it is easy to see that an ethnobotanical paper on the Island Carib is timely. The value of ethnobotany as an aid in tracing the origin and migrations of peoples and in ex-

[text continues on p 518 - Ann/pt]

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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called *kadkai*. Basketry « satchels » slung by a cord or band from the shoulder (*kakále*), and « travel-baskets » carried in canoes or used in the home for storage (*kenadé*), are closely woven in twill or wickerwork and in a variety of patterns. Moreover, each such basket consists of a « head » and a « bottom » which telescope into one another; each of these in turn being made in duplicate of an outer « skin » and an inner « member » between which layers of cachibou leaves (*Calathea lutea*) are arranged in such a way as to render the container waterproof.

For obvious reasons, stone implements, bone fish-hooks, and (later) baked-clay griddles and bows and arrows ceased to be made as soon as they could be replaced by their more efficient European equivalents. Nor have hammocks or pottery been regularly made for the past hundred years. But most of the basketry, dugout canoes, bromelia fishing-lines, wooden mortars and pestles and troughs, cane-presses, and calabash vessels are still made and used; while horticulture of the « slash and burn » variety is still carried on by means of the billhookshaped « cutlass » and the dibble or digging stick.

In their gardens or provision-grounds, which were (and are) always situated on the interior heights behind their homes, various kinds of manioc and sweet potatoes predominated. « Pumpkins » (*ouoüoma*) and maize were secondary crops. Plantains (*kalálo*), an importation from the Old World, and possibly bananas (of a variety called *kakáka*), were cultivated soon after the Conquest, and soon became very popular, as also did one tropical American species of yam (*Dioscorea trifida*, Island-Carib *kéwe*). The present-day predominance of other true yams from the Old World, oriental « dasheen » (*chou de Chine*), and New World tania (Island-Carib *mon téte*, women *néke*) is of recent date among the Indians of Dominica. With the exception of tania, these crops would seem to have been taken over from the Negroes in the last thirty or forty years in order to offset a decline in game, wild foodstuffs, and fish.

Island-Carib men continued to learn and use a special vocabulary of Cariban ancestry, which gradually dwindled until, a generation before the last native speaker of the Dominican dialect died (about 1920), this consisted of little more than a score of words, among which were those for « I » (m. *da*, w. *nakáio*), « thou » (m. *amáre*, w. *kakáio*), « man » (m. *nákeri*, w. *néiri*), and « woman » (m. *néri*, w. *kíeru*), employed in a language whose flexions, syntax, and other basic vocabulary were essentially Arawakan.

Until the present « Carib Reserve » was formed in 1903, the Indians were scattered in various settlements along the north, east, and south shores of Dominica. The reservation is situated near the middle of the windward coast, and comprises 3700 acres of rugged indented coastline to which spurs run down from a mountain chain running roughly north and south. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Dominican Island-Carib had, according to du Tertre, acquired a few slaves; and it is probably with these that miscegenation started. Today the Reserve has about five hundred inhabitants, of whom not more than a fifth can reasonably be considered as « full-blooded » Amerindians.

Plant lore among the Carib may be roughly divided into three classes:

1. Species, wild or cultivated, which are or may be used for food or drink.

2. Species, wild or cultivated, which are or may be used for domestic purposes, including the making of dugouts and all implements and utensils pertaining to hunting, fishing, gardening, food gathering and preparation.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

DIOSCOREACEAE. Yam Family.

X 824 **Dioscorea spp.**

Yam.

A number of species and varieties of the true yams are planted throughout the West Indies for their edible tuberous rootstocks. Some of these species like the greater yam (*Dioscorea alata* L.), the yellow Guinea yam (*D. cayennensis* Lam.), the white Guinea yam (*D. rotundata* Poir.) and the lesser yam (*D. esculenta* (Lour.) Burkill) are of Old World origin, having been introduced since the Conquest; one, the cush-cush (*D. trifida* L. f.), is a native of tropical America.

[241 262] The inhabitants of Dominica, both Creole and Carib, cultivate yams for food to a considerable extent, the varieties of cush-cush (Carib: *nâmai* (m), *bâsu* (w)) being especially popular. For a further local use of the yellow Guinea yam (called in Dominica «yam jaune») see discussion under *Ipomoea pes-caprae*.

Specimen citation: 111 (T), 3377.

Rajania cordata Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1032. 1753.

Rajania pleioneura Griesbach, Fl. Br. W. I. 588. (1864).

Rajania sintenisii Uline in Urban Symb. Ant. 3 281. (1902).

Ouaoua. — *bôbi, baidrali.*

A common twining vine found throughout the West Indies. This species is plentiful in some localities in Dominica, and is found from lower to middle elevations.

[262] [241] The swollen rootstock of wawa is the only wild root food much used, but never cultivated, by the Island Caribs, who claim its cultivation would cause their family to die out!

Specimen citation: 3216.

IRIDACEAE. Iris Family.

Eleutherine bulbosa (Miller) Urban, Fedde Repert. 15: 305. 1918.

Cipura plicata Griesbach, Fl. Br. W. I. 589. 1864.

Galatea bulbosa Britton, Mem. Brookl. Bot. Gard. 1: 37. 1918. Charlotte Caraibe.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

X824 nioc. — *kiére* (m), *kīī* (w) – Bitter Manioc. *iúbue* (m), *kamánid*, *kumánana* – Sweet Manioc.

Manioc is one of the most important root crops of the American tropics, and has been long cultivated by the lowland Indians of this region. It is native to South America, probably Brazil (21), but has been introduced into the tropical and sub-tropical regions throughout the world. The first mention of cassava is by Peter MARTYR [34], who recorded it from both the American continent and the West Indies to which islands it had probably been carried by the Arawaks and Caribs.

Manioc varieties may be divided into two groups — bitter manioc (manioc amer) and sweet manioc (including manioc doux and camanioc). The bitter varieties contain much greater quantities of poisonous prussic acid, and consequently the sweet forms are treated by some as a separate species or variety.

[241] Many types of manioc amer are cultivated by the Caribs (e. g. : « noir », « blanc », « violet », « bleu », « beurre », « cent-libres », etc.) while only one type each of manioc doux and camanioc are known by them. Red-stalked manioc doux is non-poisonous and may be used as a vegetable either boiled or roasted. It has a better taste then camanioc which, although less poisonous than manioc amer, must be used with caution as a vegetable.

[252 262]

[278 752] Bitter manioc, in addition to its uses as prepared food, may be grated and employed (without the removal of the prussic acid) in the form of a poultice for sores and infected wounds.

252 X824 The roots of bitter manioc are scraped, washed, and grated into a « kunu » or cassava trough (*batáis*), and then are squeezed either by wringing in cloths or in the Carib stocking-like basketry contraption known in patois as couleuvre [*rukúma* (w), *mátapi* (m)]. The resulting juice with its prussic acid [35] is collected in a receptacle below. The moochasse or cassava-starch [*tibúkulu* (m),

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[34] Manioc was known to most early historians as yuca, a name still used in many parts of tropical America.

[35] Into this leached acid Caribs are said to have formerly dipped their arrows in order to poison them, but it is difficult to see how plain dilute manioc-water could have imparted any real poison. This claim seems the more improbable when one realizes that the small indigenous mammals of Dominica suffer no ill effects when fed raw manioc.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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tropical origin and was grown in the Americas in pre-Columbian time, its exact homeland is unknown. Columbus saw sweet potatoes for the first time in the West Indies where they were grown apparently by Carib and Arawak (69).

Many types of sweet potatoes are cultivated in the Carib Reserve, but the red watery variety, often erroneously termed « yam » in the United States, is most popular. From this form of sweet potato a sort of beer used to be made either with or without the addition of cassava. Thirty years ago sweet potatoes were much more extensively grown by the Caribs, and today seem to have been largely displaced by taniers (*Xanthosoma* spp.), dasheen (*Colocasia esculenta*), and yams (*Dioscorea* spp.).

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

Ipomoea pes-caprae (Linnaeus) Roth, Nov. Sp. 109. 1821. Beach Morning-Glory. — Patate Bord la Mer. — **kwákule**.

A creeping herbaceous vine, common as a pioneer halophyte on coastal sands throughout the Old and New World tropics.

The leaves of patate bord la mer are ingredients of several different ritual baths used by the Caribs for various purposes. One such bath utilizing this plant is described under *Ocimum micranthum*. Another bath effective for any sickness caused by pisi utilises, in addition to the leaves of patate bord la mer and the root of gingembre douleur (*Hedychium coronarium*), the leaves of the following plants:

acacia (no specimens seen but undoubtedly a local species of *Acacia* or *Mimosa*).
chardon blanc (*Erygium foetidum*).
figuier (*Ficus* sp.).
lantanne (*Lantana pudica*).
kwi kwi tremblaur (two specimens not seen but definitely *Melastomaceae* and probably a *Miconia*, species of which are known in Dominica as kwi kwi).
kwikwirik (*Peperomia alliacea*).
larali (*Clusia plukenetii*).
mahiwa (*Lonchocarpus sonorae*).
maho pimant (*Daphnopsis caribaea*).
malbrak (*Piper* spp.).
mal l'estomac (*Piper* spp.).
pipe sandoli (unidentified but possibly *Aristolochia* subgenus DC.).
poirier blanc (*Tabebuia pallida*).
roi bois (*Tetrazygia martinicensis*).
roko (*Bixa orellana*).
sen margue (*Cassia bicapsularis*).
'ti lauzie (*Hyptis atrorubens*).
weed (an unidentified marine seaweed).
yam jaune (*Dioscorea cayennensis*).

Specimen citation: 818, 2960.